

August 24, 2009

Dear DCPS Parent,

We are taking steps to reduce the spread of flu in the DC Public Schools. We want to keep the schools open, and students learning during this flu season. We are working closely with the Mayor's Office and the DC Department of Health to monitor flu conditions and make decisions about the best steps to take concerning our schools. If the flu becomes more severe, we will take additional steps to prevent the spread of infection. For now we are doing everything we can to keep our schools functioning normally. We will update you with new information as it becomes available.

Flu can easily spread from person to person. Here are several ways in which you can help to prevent the spread of flu:

- **Teach your children to wash their hands** often with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub. You can set a good example by doing this yourself.
- **Teach your children to cover their coughs and sneezes** with tissues or with their elbows when a tissue is unavailable.
- **Teach your children not to share personal items** like drinks, food or unwashed utensils.
- **Know the signs and symptoms of the flu.** Symptoms of the flu include fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit/37.8 degrees Celsius or greater), cough, sore throat, a runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, and feeling very tired. Some people may also vomit or have diarrhea.
- **Keep sick children at home** for at least 24 hours *after* they no longer have fever or do not have signs of fever, without using fever-reducing drugs. Keeping children with a fever at home will reduce the number of people who may get infected.
- **Do not send children to school if they are sick.** Any children who are determined to be sick while at school *will be sent home*.

For more information, see the attached flyer and visit our website at dcps.dc.gov. For the most current information about flu in the District, please visit doh.dc.gov or call 311. Thank you for working with us to protect our children.

Sincerely,



Michelle Rhee, DCPS Chancellor